

REMARKS

Claims 1 – 16 are pending and under consideration in the above-identified application.

In the Office Action, Claims 1 – 16 were rejected.

In this Amendment, Claims 1, 2, 5 – 7, 12 and 15 – 16 are amended. No new matter has been introduced as a result of this Amendment.

Accordingly, Claims 1 – 16 remain at issue.

I. 35 U.S.C. § 103 Obviousness Rejection of Claims

Claims 1-16 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Nishijima et al. (“*Nishijima*”) (U.S. Patent No. 6,263,151) in view of Ozue et al. (“*Ozue*”) (U.S. Publication No. 2004-0021982). Although Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection, to further prosecution, independent Claims 1, 2, 7 and 12 have been amended to clarify the invention and remove any ambiguities that may have been at the basis of this rejection.

Claim 1 is directed to a magnetic recording head for a helical scan type magnetic recording/reproducing apparatus. The magnetic recording head comprises a multi-gap recording head formed by laminating “n” recording heads and having “n” recording gaps, the “n” being an integer greater than 2, wherein, the “n” recording gaps are wider than a track pitch and partially overlap each other in a *cascading* pitched manner in a width direction of the recording head so as to record a pattern of juxtaposed tracks, and a gap for recording the last track among “n” recording gaps of the multi-gap recording head being wider than other gaps.

Thus, the claimed magnetic recording head has “n” laminated recording gaps that are wider than a track pitch and partially overlap each other in a cascading pitched manner in a width direction of the recording head so as to record a pattern of juxtaposed tracks. Moreover, a gap for recording the last track among “n” gaps of the multi-gap recording head has a wider gap than other gaps.

Referring to Applicants’ Figure 2 as an illustrative example, Applicants’ claimed invention comprises a multi-gap recording head 30 configured by laminating recording heads W1 to W4. Recording heads W2 to W4 have a core width CW equal to a track width TP augmented by $\alpha 1$ so as to partially overlap by $\alpha 1$ each other and the tracks formed by the recording heads W1 to W3. That is, the recording head W4 overlaps by $\alpha 1$ recording head W2,

which in turn overlaps W3 by α_1 , as do W3 over W2 and W2 over W1. That is, recording heads partially overlap each other in a cascading pitched manner, starting with recording head W4 and ending with recording head W1. In addition, the recording head W1 has a core width equal to $TP + \alpha_2$ so as to project by α_2 outward of its track pitch TP, with α_2 being greater than α_1 .

This is clearly unlike both *Nishijima* and *Ozue*. The Examiner asserts that *Nishijima* discloses that the “n” recording gaps partially overlap each other in a cascading pitched manner and points to heads 3 and 6 shown in FIG. 3 for support. However, upon further analysis of at least FIGs. 2, 3 and 4, recording heads 2 through 7, including heads 3 and 6, do partially overlap each other but not in a cascading pitched manner, as required by Claim 1. In fact, head 3 overlap completely head 6, rather than partially, as required by Claim 1.

Moreover, *Ozue* also fails to teach or suggest “n” recording gaps partially overlap each other in a cascading pitched manner. See FIGs. 2, 5 - 8, and 10 – 15, for example.

As such, the references *Nishijima* and *Ozue*, singly or in combination with each other, fail to teach or disclose fail to teach or suggest a magnetic recording head with “n” recording gaps that are wider than a track pitch and partially overlap each other in a cascading pitched manner along a width direction of the recording head so as to record a pattern of juxtaposed tracks, and a gap for recording the last track among “n” gaps of the multi-gap recording head has a wider gap than other gaps.

Accordingly, Claim 1 is patentable over *Nishijima* and *Ozue*, taken singly or in combination with each other, as are dependent Claims 3 – 5, and 6.

Independent Claims 2, 7, and 12 have been amended in a similar fashion as Claim 1. As such, these claims are also patentable over *Nishijima* and *Ozue*, as are their corresponding dependent claims for at least the same reasons.

Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request that these claim rejections be withdrawn.

II. Conclusion

In view of the above amendments and remarks, Applicant submits that Claims 1 – 16 are clearly allowable over the cited prior art, and respectfully requests early and favorable notification to that effect.

Respectfully submitted,

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